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DAAG-PAP-A (M) (21 Apr 72) DAFD-OTT-72BQ01

3 May 1972

SUBJECT: Senior Officer Debriefing Report: [REDACTED]
3d Brigade (Separate), 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile)
Period 10 April 1971 to 13 December 1971 (U)

11/13 Nov 71

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10 Jonathan R. Burton

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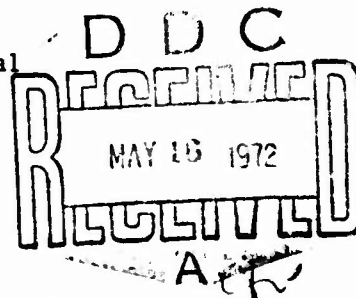
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R. Burton

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THRU: Commanding General
United States Army Vietnam
ATTN: AVHDO-DO
APO 96375

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development
ATTN: For OT UT
Department of the Army
Washington, D.C. 20310

Country: Republic of Vietnam
Debriefing Report by: Brigadier General Jonathan R. Burton

Duty Assignment: Commanding General of 3rd Brigade (Separate),
1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile)

Inclusive Dates: 10 April 1971 to 13 December 1971

Date of Report: 13 November 1971

1. Introduction: The purpose of this report is to convey personal observations and reflections regarding the employment of a separate Airmobile Brigade in a combat environment. The report focuses on the period of time subsequent to the stand-down of the 1st Cavalry Division and the activation of the 3rd Brigade (Separate) in April 1971. Views expressed herein however have been influenced by observations derived from earlier assignments as Assistant Division Commander for Support and then Assistant Division Commander for Maneuver in the 1st Cavalry Division. This report will not analyse or retrace events in a chronological or functional manner; such information has already been well-documented and forwarded through channels.

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2. Mission: My missions upon assuming command on 13 April 1971 were:

a. To conduct operations against enemy main and local force elements and their lines of communications and base areas within the assigned area of operations.

b. To support the combined campaign plan and Community Defense and Local Development Plans in Long Khanh and Binh Tuy Provinces.

c. To be prepared to execute assigned contingency plans. These missions remained valid throughout the period of my command; however, the assigned area of operations was modified on occasion and contingency plans were added or deleted as required.

3. Operational Environment:

a. Area of Operations: The area of operations (AO) of the Brigade measured approximately 3500 square miles and included all of GVN Binh Tuy Province most of Long Khanh, and parts of Bien Hoa and Lam Dong Provinces (See Inclosure 1 for the Brigade AO). It is significant to note that the Brigade retained approximately two-thirds of the AO of the 1st Cavalry Division while retaining only one-third of its assets (See Inclosure 2 for the locations of the Division and Brigade AO's). The area south of QL-1 in Binh Tuy Province is primarily a coastal plain covered with undergrowth or single canopy jungle, and is generally flat except for three key mountains: Nui Be, Nui May Tau, and Nui Nhon. The main enemy element located in this area is the MR-7 Rear Service Group which operates from Nui Be. Base Area 305, a key spot for enemy headquarters operations, lies north of QL-1 and astride the Long Khanh-Binh Tuy Province boundary. It is an area of heavy vegetation centrally located with respect to the other key terrain features of the AO. The northwestern portion of Binh Tuy Province is heavily populated and contains the largest rice-producing area in MR-3. The northeastern portion of the province contains Base Area 306, a haven for enemy rear headquarters elements. The terrain is very rugged and mountainous and is relatively uninhabited. The portion of Long Khanh north and west of QL-20, known as War Zone D, consists of double and triple canopy jungle. Steep ridges and valleys dominate the central and eastern portion of War Zone D. The severity of the terrain not only impedes ground movement but also significantly limits radio communications (See Inclosure 3 for the relative position of key areas).

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b. Nature of the enemy: The enemy main force threat in the Brigade's AO was the 33rd NVA regiment with a strength of about 1300. Enemy activity throughout the reporting period generally remained at a low level and consisted primarily of frequent light contacts, brief attacks by fire, and terrorist activities. The enemy consistently chose to avoid US forces and make contact only when and where he chose. He stood and fought only when he felt he had definite advantages or when he was protecting some highly valued piece of terrain or a weapons cache. Heaviest contacts occurred late in June approximately 10 kilometers northeast of Xuan Loc. During this period, contact was with the 33rd NVA Regiment which was well situated in fortified bunker complexes. Moderate casualties were taken on both sides; statistics for the month of June show that 106 enemy were KIA, while 11 US were KIA and 39 US were WIA. Since that time the enemy has chosen to avoid US forces. The enemy's primary missions were apparently directed toward interrupting the GVN Community Defense and Local Development Programs. To accomplish this mission, the enemy elected to prepare the battlefield by establishing communication and resupply channels, food and weapons caches, training new replacements, and then targeting against the VN forces after the withdrawal of US Forces. To prevent the enemy from attaining his goals, the infantry companies and platoons operated as light scouting forces whose mission was to search out the enemy, locate him accurately, and bring all possible firepower upon him. Since the enemy tactics have attempted to entice our infantrymen to attack heavily defended bunker complexes, our counter-tactics attempted to root them out of their holes with airstrikes and tube and aerial artillery. After the fires were massed on the enemy, the infantry unit then swept the area to clear out any remaining enemy and destroy all caches and bunkers.

4. Experiences in Command:

a. Concept of Operations: Accomplishment of the Brigade's mission was achieved by assigning each of the four infantry battalions a portion of the Brigade AO based upon the capability of the unit to cover the area and the intelligence available. No attempt was made to allocate the entire Brigade AO due to its size. Unassigned areas were covered by available surveillance and intelligence-gathering assets. The Brigade's operations were oriented on pursuit of the enemy, particularly the 33rd NVA Regiment. Battalion AO's were changed as intelligence and operations indicated the likelihood that the enemy

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had shifted his forces. Within each battalion AO, firebases were established to provide direct support artillery coverage for infantry elements operating away from the bases. Normally two bases were established in each battalion AO with each base having a split artillery battery (3 howitzers each). In this manner artillery coverage was maximized and mutual support could be provided. The only fixed firebase was FSB Mace at which was located the Brigade Forward Service Support Element. The Brigade rear area remained at Bien Hoa during the entire period. Some of the aviation units were located at Phu Loi, Plantation, and Bearcat, (See Inclosure 1). Security for the Bien Hoa base area was drawn from Brigade and non-Brigade units occupying Bien Hoa and was controlled by a Garrison Headquarters established to oversee base defense and support type activities.

b. Techniques of Employment:

(1) Force employment: Due to the excellent concealment afforded the enemy by the double and triple canopy jungle, and his efforts to avoid contact with US Forces, elements of the Brigade were in active contact less than fifteen percent of the time. During the balance of the time Brigade assets were occupied in trying to find and fix the enemy forces. Brigade operations were oriented heavily toward reconnaissance and then responding rapidly once a target was developed. To achieve those ends, extensive use was made of Rangers, Air Cavalry, and platoon and squad size patrols to locate enemy forces. Once enemy forces were located and the extent of the contact evaluated, Brigade's fire power was massed and maneuver forces committed as required. A typical action might stem from enemy forces or an occupied bunker complex being observed by a Ranger Team after which a Pink Team (an armed LOH and a Cobra) immediately would be sent in to further develop the target. When the Rangers required assistance or additional forces to maintain contact, Blue Team (aero-rifle platoon) would be inserted. Simultaneously with the decision to insert the Blue Team, a Quick Reaction Force (QRF) of one infantry company would be placed on 30 minute notice for possible combat assault into the target area. The battalion commander providing the QRF assumed operational control of all forces involved in the contact upon insertion of the QRF force. The Ranger and Blue Teams were usually extracted upon insertion of the infantry. Fire support in the target areas was provided by Aerial Field Artillery (AFA), tube artillery, and FAC-controlled close air support. The capability to conduct such

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operations involving wide-area search combined with an explosive reaction-to-contact was tailored into the structure of the Brigade. Specific measures taken to tailor the force are discussed in detail later in this report.

(2) Leaving fire support bases intact: Contrary to the policy of many units in Vietnam, the 3rd Brigade found it advantageous to leave FSB's virtually intact instead of leveling and sterilizing them if reuse could be anticipated. When a FSB was closed, all bunkers, fighting positions, TOC's, defensive wire, etc. were left intact. In this manner, the FSB could be reoccupied in a short time with bunkers, berms, and positions already constructed, thus requiring fewer CM-47 sorties for movement of class IV materials. The enemy has not mined or booby trapped these positions. To protect against such happenings, however, the first element of the unit to reoccupy the base included a mine sweep team.

c. Combat operations: During the brief period since the unit began operations as a separate brigade, the 3rd Bde repeatedly demonstrated the required flexibility and mobility to target on the enemy as he changed his base locations and tactics. When the enemy broke into small 5 - 10 man groups, Brigade infantry units utilized platoon sized operations to engage the enemy. As large elements were engaged, companies were rapidly assembled and deployed. Further evidence of the Brigade's flexibility in covering wide areas was demonstrated by the use of Ranger Teams and Mini-Cav operations (short duration, platoon-sized, airmobile operations, executed on the basis of reliable, but highly perishable intelligence) to locate the enemy and to deny him use of the rocket belt in the Bien Hoa area. Without the mobility inherent in the structure of a separate cavalry brigade, such techniques could not have been used.

d. Intelligence:

(1) Special Intelligence: The 3rd Bde, 1st Cav Div more so than other units in Vietnam, has relied heavily upon and achieved excellent results from information provided by Special Intelligence sources. This information used in conjunction with visual reconnaissance, sensors, Ranger Teams, SLAR, Red Haze, and Sniffer enabled the Brigade to successfully target against the major enemy headquarters and battalions within the Brigade's area of operation. Current regulations, which severely limit the distribution of special intelligence, are too restrictive. Those who have the most pressing need to know,

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the battalion commanders and their S-2's, are specifically prohibited from receiving all of this extremely lucrative intelligence information. In addition, transmission security requirements preclude sending special intelligence to the field except to a very limited degree. As a result, the Brigade Staff has a wealth of very valuable timely intelligence information that is not releasable to the maneuver battalions. The system must be revised in order that special intelligence can be used by the field commander at the battalion level.

(2) Information gathering devices (Sniffer, Red Haze, and SLAR): Of these three assets, Sniffer provided the greatest yield/output ratio. Red Haze and SLAR proved to be generally ineffective over jungle terrain during the Monsoon Season. Reaction to both SLAR and Red Haze was often difficult because gunship escort was not provided; consequently, readouts were used only to develop patterns of enemy activity. However, the high abort rate (especially in the case of Red Haze) made it difficult to fly continuous nightly coverage over a given area; hence pattern analysis was generally invalid. Red Haze and SLAR would appear to be more effective against a conventional type enemy under more favorable conditions of terrain and weather. When Red Haze and SLAR are developing patterns of enemy activity, better results are obtained by flying over the same area for extended periods rather than flying over a different area night after night. Sniffer however, played a much greater part in the intelligence collection program because the equipment is less sophisticated and has a much lower mission abort rate. Also, by providing gunship escort for Sniffer missions, a quick reaction to heavy readouts and/or sightings was achieved.

(3) Rangers and Air Cavalry: The two most significant means for gathering information were the Ranger Company and the two Air Cavalry Troops, both of which were under the operational control of the Brigade S-2 and thus readily available to expand the intelligence picture.

(a) Rangers: The success of the Ranger Company was truly outstanding. This success was attributed to two factors: extensive and continuous training of all Rangers and knowledge of each Ranger that the entire Brigade would react to support him when he made contact with an enemy force. Based on the demonstrated success of the Ranger Company, the number of teams was increased from 4 to 8. The Rangers of H Company, 75th

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Infantry were all volunteers and were trained by the company staff. Training standards were extremely rigorous resulting in a trainee wash-out rate of approximately 75 percent in each training cycle. The goal was quality not quantity. Each Ranger received training in rappelling and the use of McGuire Rigs (device used to hoist an individual into or out of a hovering helicopter in areas not having landing zones [LZ's]). A Ranger Team consisted of a team leader, an assistant team leader, and four team members. They operated both in reconnaissance and ambush posture. The team was inserted into the assigned AO by a UH-1H snip which was escorted by an OH-6A and AH-1G (Pink Team). A normal mission was five days; however, if a team made contact or had its position compromised it was extracted. The teams were employed primarily for intelligence gathering; however they accounted for approximately 30 percent of the Brigade's kills due to their skill in ambush operations.

(b) Air Cavalry Troops: The two Air Cavalry Troops were major factors in enabling the Brigade to remain abreast of enemy activity. The troops were employed in two basic roles - visual reconnaissance and support of ground units in contact. The results have been outstanding in providing information concerning movement of enemy forces, discovering new basecamps and resupply routes, and in destroying the enemy. The Air Cavalry missions were normally accomplished by using one OH-6A (white bird) covered by an AH-1G (red bird); this observation/fighter helicopter duo formed a Pink Team. The OH-6A was used in a visual reconnaissance role and to draw fire from any enemy units in the area. The AH-1G would provide cover, suppressive fire, navigational control, and communications between the team and the Brigade TOC. The Air Cav Troops also provided the TOC with instantaneous information concerning developments in the AO. The two Air Cavalry Troops' success is demonstrated by the fact that they have provided approximately 44% of the Brigade's kills since April.

e. Counterintelligence:

(1) Vietnamese Counterintelligence Personnel: In September 1971, liaison visits with the Vietnamese Counterintelligence Service and the Military Security Service (MSS) resulted in the assignment of four MSS agents directly to the Military Intelligence Detachment. This was the first time that MSS personnel had been assigned to a US combat unit in the Republic of Vietnam. Additionally, two female MSS agents were hired

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through the Civilian Labor Office in the capacity of female stripsearchers. Although primarily used against possible enemy agents inserted among the local Nationals employed on Bien Hoa Army Base, the MCS personnel were also utilized in a drug suppression role. Since the MSS possesses power of arrest, controls security investigations of all Vietnamese Nationals, and has trained interrogators, their effectiveness in both CI and drug suppression has been outstanding. The continued use of this team is expected to limit the amount of drugs transported onto Bien Hoa Army Base and to weed out possible enemy infiltrators on the base.

(2) Fire Support Base Sweeps: A program was instituted in July to provide counterintelligence (CI) teams to each Fire Support Base (FSB) Commander for use in insuring that no CLASSIFIED information was left at a FSB being closed, that CLASSIFIED information was properly handled during movement, and that salvageable materials deemed useful to the enemy (e.g. radio batteries discarded as too weak for transmitting but useful to the enemy for listening and monitoring) were not left behind. Following the first series of CI inspections, there was a marked decrease in the amount of material and information uncovered by the CI teams.

f. Aviation Support:

(1) Consolidation of aviation units: The brigade aviation assets were drawn from existing division units as shown in Inclosure 4. To overcome administrative, logistical, and command problems, all aviation units with the exception of the Aircraft Maintenance and Supply Company and Medevac Platoon were placed under the command of the Aviation Battalion Commander. The organization shown at Inclosure 5 was formed when the 3d Brigade was activated. This consolidation offered the advantage of providing the separate units with an administrative headquarters to assist in solving their problems. An important aspect of this consolidation is that these separate aviation units were supervised by an aviation command and staff. Although the aviation battalion had eight subordinate elements, seven of these being aviation units, the span of control did not present significant problems. The aviation staff at Brigade Headquarters was increased to provide an assistant Brigade Aviation Officer, a Brigade Aviation Safety Officer, a Brigade Aircraft Maintenance Officer and two Aviation Battalion Liaison Officers to advise the Brigade Staff and coordinate aviation mission requests.

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(2) Tailoring of organic aviation assets: A primary advantage of the Airmobile Brigade having organic aviation assets is that the commander can tailor his varied mix of aviation assets to meet the requirements of size of area of operation, terrain, and the enemy that opposes him. In consideration of these factors the Brigade shifted and re-organized its aviation assets as shown in Inclosure 6.

(a) Air Cav Troop: One Air Cavalry Troop could not provide the desired visual reconnaissance over the Brigade's extensive area of operations. The Aerial Weapons Company was used to form the base for a second Air Cavalry Troop. The Aerial Weapons Company was chosen because it had the AH-1G aircraft organic and had operated as a provisional Air Cavalry Troop before the Division stood down. The two Air Cavalry Troops provided a total of six visual reconnaissance teams a day.

(b) Aerial Field Artillery: With the Aerial Weapons company operating as an Air Cavalry Troop, the Aerial Field Artillery Battery was given the additional mission of providing armed escort for the troop lift aircraft. To accomplish this, additional AH-1G aircraft were assigned from the Aerial Weapons Company. This change has provided the same coverage for both the artillery mission and the armed escort.

(c) Command and Control Aircraft: All command and control aircraft were consolidated in the general support platoon. This provided a pool of aircraft and equipment with a common mission. This unit usually flew more hours per aircraft than any of the other units and was given priority for maintenance support.

(d) Assault Helicopter Companies: The changes reduced the troop lift capabilities of the assault helicopter companies; however overall gain to the Brigade due to the reorganization offset reduced capabilities.

(3) Aircraft Maintenance: Aircraft availability depends on maintenance capabilities and the hours flown. Since this Brigade was the first of its type formed, it was difficult to determine how many hours the Brigade could fly and still enjoy a respectable availability. The flight hour program that was developed was not a hard and fast rule but a guide for aircraft utilization. It was found that if this guide

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was not followed, a corresponding reduction in aircraft availability resulted. Listed below are the programmed, and actual monthly flying hours per aircraft and availability by type aircraft from 1 April 71 to 31 October 71:

<u>PROGRAMMED</u>	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>AVERAGE OPERATIONAL READY</u>
OH-6A 60	74.75	82.6%
AH-1G 55	69.29	79.5%
UH-1H 70	81.62	83.7%
CH-47 47	52.31	70.7%

In order to implement this program, command emphasis has been placed on the request for and the use of aircraft. Normally this program would provide the Brigade with the required airmobility. Two prime factors contributed to over flying the programmed hours: first was the requirement for the Brigade to execute contingency plans in support of units standing down for redeployment; and second was the vast size of the Brigade area of operation.

g. Training:

(1) Combat Training Center (CTC): All replacement personnel for the 3rd Brigade (Sep) received training in subjects that are especially useful to the soldier in Vietnam. CTC was established because many soldiers arriving in the Brigade were not fully prepared to become skytroopers. RVN training at many CONUS POR Centers was not applicable to the 1st Cav's organization, mission, and area of operations. After trying several scheduling arrangements, it was determined that a four day training cycle was most feasible. The training presented at CTC fulfilled many requirements: it afforded the Commanding General the opportunity to greet all incoming personnel; it insured that all USARV required subjects (Rules of Engagement, OPSEC, handling of POW's, Code of Conduct and Geneva Convention) were covered; it gave the individual an opportunity to test fire and zero his assigned weapon; and it allowed the soldier to find out exactly where he was located, what his unit was doing, and who he was fighting. Training also included airmobile operations, MEDEVAC procedures, rappelling, and artillery adjustment procedures.

(2) Bunker Training: Since May 1971, combat units of the 1st Cavalry Division have sustained increased casualties when encountering the enemy in his bunker complexes. To remedy this situation, a bunker training course was established at CTC. This training, included a live fire exercise on how to attack a bunker complex utilizing the organic fire support of the Brigade. The training was conducted as a platoon problem since that was the size unit most frequently used in actual contact. This training was valuable since it gave the individual soldier a ground level view of some of the problems he would encounter, i.e. thick vegetation prohibiting movement and difficulty in sighting the enemy.

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(3) Marksmanship Training: Although the brigade was doing an excellent job of putting relentless pressure on the major enemy formations and headquarters, it was doing an unsatisfactory job of killing and/or capturing the enemy in ground contacts on the jungle terrain. 60 to 75% of the engagements between the rifle platoons and enemy groups resulted in no indication of casualties to the enemy, i.e. bodies, POW's, or blood trails. To improve this situation, each battalion established a marksmanship course. The course was based upon three ranges: a 25 meter zeroing range; an open "quick shoot" range with pop-up man-sized targets at 30, 75, and 150 feet; and a quick reaction lane with pop-ups in a realistic jungle trail environment. Each rifleman, while on the firebase for a five day period between missions, would shoot the course. In addition to this training, each soldier received nine hours of marksmanship training while at CTC. This training included techniques of fire, zeroing, and quick reaction course. The individual was taught to take well aimed single shots from the shoulder, with only point men and back-up point men firing on fully automatic from the hip.

h. Personnel Management:

(1) The Rifle Company rotation plan: Because of the vastness of the Cav AO, the companies of the battalions conducted essentially independent operations, each company under battalion control, but widely separated from each other. All companies operated within the artillery fan of at least one firebase. The general pattern was for the companies to operate in the "bush" for approximately fifteen days. While in the bush the company was resupplied by helicopter every three or four days with ammunition, rations, and water. If a set-down LZ was present, a hot meal and ice cream, a change of clothes, mail, newspapers, and other miscellaneous comfort items were delivered. The entire resupply process generally occupied the better part of a day; under the best conditions the resupply operation required 3-4 hours. At the completion of fifteen days in the field, the company rotated to a firebase and provided base security for a period of five days. While at the firebase, the company was refitted, underwent bunker and marksmanship training, and took care of administrative matters and personal affairs. Every 45 days on a rotational basis, each rifle company and recon platoon was sent to the First Team R&R Center for a three-day standdown. This in-country R&R Center was opened at Vung Tau in March 1971. Up-grading of this facility was a continuous effort and it gave troops an excellent opportunity to wind down after six weeks in the field. Although the operation of the center was a drain on personnel and material assets (26 people were required to operate the center), acceptance of this program was widespread and "Vung Tau R&R" became a much sought after privilege by all Skytroopers. The fact that the soldier in the bush knew that he would return to the firebase every fifteen days and be given an in-country R&R every 45 days provided a great lift for the individual rifleman. Although the schedule was flexible due to operational commitments, the program was a major positive morale factor for the unit. The degree of morale, spirit, and individual motivation fostered by the Vung Tau R & R was deemed to have far outweighed any disadvantages of the program.

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(2) Other Morale Building Programs: Two additional programs that significantly improved morale were the "Flying PX" and the "King for a Day" programs. A Flying PX was established with the primary mission of improving the welfare of the infantryman in the field by providing the Skytroopers at the fire support bases with PX services not available to him through other means. In order to insure accomplishment of the program's purpose, both aircraft and wheeled vehicles (rolling PX) were used. This service also included contact teams that assisted with financial, personnel, and legal problems of the troops in the field. Supplementing this, was the Brigade's policy of selecting each week one company or battery commander or aviation platoon leader to visit the Brigade headquarters for recognition of his duty performance. His selection not only permitted him to gain insight into brigade operations, but more importantly afforded staff members the opportunity to uncover problems in their respective spheres of responsibility. The selected commander was given VIP treatment. During this reign, the "King for a Day" attended the General's briefings, met the Brigade staff, toured the area of operations with the Commanding General, and received an appropriate 1st Cavalry Division memento. Since its initiation, the program has worked to the benefit of both the commander who enjoyed being selected and the Brigade Staff members who learned of various problem areas at the subordinate unit level.

(3) Shortage of field medics: Another factor that had a significant impact on both morale and maintenance of field strength was the shortage of field medics. A large number of the in-country field medic population was absorbed into various drug treatment and drug detoxification efforts external to the Brigade. Likewise, the Brigade had to draw from its own assigned medic strength (normally below 85% full) in order to man its own drug exemption center/clinic which was vital to the overall effort.

(4) Human relations: The Brigade has had a low incident rate of human relations problems. Human relation councils were formed at all echelons within the Brigade. All Skytroopers were given the opportunity to present their problems through many different channels. All problems were considered on a personal basis and a definite, clear-cut answer given to all queries. The Human Relations Program was supervised by a Brigade Human Relations Officer who had the responsibility to keep all commanders advised of developments in the area. A Brigade contact team was established under the control of the Brigade Human Relations Officer for the purpose of moderating rap sessions of subordinate level units of their request, assisting units to achieve better channels of communications, and examining all aspects of human relations. Furthermore, an "Action Line" which allowed personnel with problems to get answers to questions and at the same time remain anonymous was established at Brigade Headquarters. The "Action Line" objective was to provide answers to all queries within 24 hours. Success in human relations depends on developing awareness and sensitivity of leaders and on establishing viable communication channels vertically and horizontally throughout the Brigade.

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(5) Drug abuse. The First Team's Third Brigade has enjoyed strong Command Support in its Drug Abuse Intervention Program. A full time Drug and Human Relations officer has been appointed, and Drug Advisory councils have been formed. The program is modeled on the guidelines set forth by USARV. There are four major aspects to the program: a) education, b) exemption, c) enforcement, and d) elimination. Personnel are briefed at CTC within 5 days of assignment. Visiting drug education teams are brought to the troops. All units are provided reading material on drugs. An individual can volunteer for rehabilitation without fear of punishment through the Brigade exemption program. These personnel are treated in the Brigade Drug Rehabilitation Center (DRC) where they have medical supervision by an M.D., counseling on a formal level by a social worker, and informal counseling by trained counselors. As of 31 October 1971, 633 individuals had been treated in the DRC. The DRC personnel are also training unit counselors who are designated by all Company sized units in the Brigade. These individuals will give supportive encouragement to rehabilitated drug users, and also serve as a source of information for their unit's drug problems. To discover individuals currently using drugs and to deter others from becoming involved in this most unfortunate activity, units are subject to unannounced urinalysis tests. These tests are stringently supervised to prevent error or switching of samples. Approximately 5% of the samples have contained narcotics traces. The personnel so identified are usually sent to the Drug Treatment Center (DTC) for detoxification and then returned to their units. Monthly follow-up urinalysis for these individuals (as well as for those discharged from the DRC) are made. Any individuals whose specimens show up positive are usually sent to the DTC. At the commander's discretion, the drug abuser can be eliminated from the Army. He waits at the Drug Abuser Holding Center (DAHC) for the proper administrative and judicial action to be taken. Approximately 29 individuals have been eliminated since 1 April 1971. Urinalysis testing proved itself to be the most useful tool available to the commander. For the first time, valid statistical data were provided. This allowed for a focus of effort and resources which hereto were diffused. The program also had the residual benefit of providing a deterrent to newly arrived personnel. Education and facilities staffed by professional personnel are most important, but as always, command support is mandatory.

1. Logistics: The First Team's modern logistics system reflected ample flexibility and capability to sustain tactical operations of the 3rd Brigade (Separate). Supplies were shipped as far forward as possible (primarily by ground transportation) in support of tactical operations. To further maximize use of ground transportation and to decrease helicopter blade time, a "Piggyback" supply system was developed. The system entailed movement of equipment and non-perishable supplies by road convoy to a point nearest the location where the cargo

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was destined. At this predetermined point a CH-47 would rendezvous with the convoy and hook the supplies directly from the carrier to the final destination. This method of resupply resulted in maximum use being derived from the least expensive mode of transportation. It also resulted in a significant reduction of blade time. Further, loading of supplies was accomplished under ideal conditions in the Brigade Base, where material handling equipment was readily available. This piggy-back supply system became a proven means of accomplishing movement of supplies as well as retrograding supplies within the 3rd Brigade (Separate).

j. Barrier Material: A significant shortage of barrier materials (specifically barbed wire, concertina, chain link fence, and engineer stakes) has existed since August. The impact of this was felt in two ways. First, because quantities on hand were not sufficient to meet requirements, some firebases were constructed with less than adequate defensive wire. Secondly, because of the requirement to recover wire and engineer stakes before moving to a new firebase, some units tended to emplace the wire in an expedient manner. Because of shortages in barrier materials, increased emphasis was placed on bunker construction and installation of claymore mines, trip flares, and fougasse.

4. Relationships with host nation forces/government: The only ARVN unit in the 3rd Brigade's AO, the 18th ARVN Division, was committed, in large part, to operations in Cambodia and previously in the Tay Ninh Area. The 18th ARVN Div HQ at Xuan Loc previously was utilized as a rear area with between one and three battalions rotating in to rest, refit, and reorganize. Consequently, the 3rd Brigade supported or worked with the ARVN battalions on an infrequent basis. On 9 Oct, III Corps assigned to the 18th ARVN Div an AO which encompassed a large part of Long Khanh Province, to include the province capital of Xuan Loc. Since that date, one regiment (the 43rd) has begun an active combat role in the area of Xuan Loc which should result in increased 3rd Brigade cooperation with the 18th ARVN Div. To facilitate coordination with local governments and local forces, the 3rd Brigade established liaison teams in each of the three provinces in the brigade AO-Long Khanh, Binh Tuy, and Phuoc Tuy. The support provided to territorial forces was limited to that necessary to permit reactions to an enemy attack or contact, such as MEDEVAC, air cav, AFA, and airlift. Territorial forces generally proved to be adequately trained and aggressive. As

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the war winds down, the Brigade will undoubtedly increase its level of support where necessary to enhance the overall effectiveness of the territorial force.

5. Relationships with third nation forces: (See Incl 7)

a. Thai operations: Joint operations were not conducted with Thai Forces, primarily due to a disinclination on the part of the Thai's to become involved; however on infrequent occasions, Air Cav and AFA assets were furnished to support Thai operations.

b. 1st Australian Task Force Operations: The 1st ATF and 3rd Brigade have conducted a number of combined operations; however, as with most other FWMAF forces, support has been limited to Air Cav, AFA, and lift support. The 1st ATF maintained a liaison team with the 3rd Brigade and a free flow of information and coordination was maintained. With the withdrawal of all Australian forces by the end of December 1971, our operations with them will terminate. The Brigade will miss the fine officers and men of the 1st ATF.

6. Garrison Operations: A serious problem faced by this Brigade and other units that preceded us at Bien Hoa was the accomplishment of base defense missions and the administrative operations of a permanent installation while simultaneously actively engaged in combat operations. Tactical units do not have this capability and our experience has shown that garrison functions can and must be carried out by a tailored TDA unit. In the case of Bien Hoa, approximately 130 personnel were required to maintain minimum operation of facilities and conduct the required long range planning and supervision of base defense activities. Even with this organization, certain inadequacies were noted: primarily, the fact that no additional authorizations were given to staff a garrison unit. Thus all personnel of necessity were derived from Brigade assets. This created an increased hardship while trying to maintain our field strength.

7. Areas requiring increased emphasis:

a. The Instant NCO Program: Graduates of this stateside program have performed in an outstanding manner in the Brigade. After a few months in the combat environment, their lack of experience is overcome and the formal training they have received starts to manifest itself. It should be noted unfortunately that the system cannot anticipate or fully prepare a man for a combat leader's role and as such some failures occur. Most soldiers who have gained their stripes through this program have demonstrated the possession of certain skills that are desperately needed by the Army. To insure that the Army retains the best men.

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for its NCO corps, both the senior NCO's and the officers must insure that the development of each man continues. They must be challenged by appropriately increasing responsibilities.

b. Reclassification of Profiled Personnel: The Brigade was continually plagued by NCO's in the grade of E-7 who possess the 11B MOS but are unable to perform due to valid physical profiles. This situation has effected the leadership at platoon level because of the lack of E-7 platoon sergeants. The nature of the war has made the platoon a vital maneuver element and therefore requires the best leadership. The experience of senior noncommissioned officers was too often absent in these positions.

c. The Communications Dilemma: Due to the vast size (approximately 3500 square miles) and the topography of the 3rd Brigade's Area of Operation (AO), FM radio retransmission and VHF radio relay facilities had to be operated on Nui Chau Chan in order to maintain contact with widely dispersed elements of the Brigade. These facilities proved inadequate at times because of the transmission distances involved and because of frequency assignment constraints arising from heavy use of Nui Chau Chan as a relay by 3rd Brigade and non-brigade units. For the separate Air Cavalry Brigade, tactical communications satellites would offer the optimum solution to the problem of providing reliable command and control communications for rapidly-moving maneuver forces over extended ranges. A less desirable alternative to tactical satellites would exist in a narrowband secure voice device which could be used with high-frequency radios when Air Cavalry operations occur beyond the ranges of FM radios. These developmental areas should be thoroughly explored for applications in support of highly mobile commands such as the 3rd Brigade (Sep).

8. Conclusion: In this report I have addressed a number of problems that faced this Brigade. In facing these problems the officers and men of the Brigade continued to reflect the esprit-de-corps and can-do attitude that has always been a part of the 1st Cavalry Division. Through enthusiasm, tireless effort, and initiative they were able to devise a workable solution. Although many units around us have been standing down, the morale and motivation of the men of the 3rd Brigade (SEP) have not diminished in the least. Every man knows that he is a member of a team, and as such, he must do his job so that none of the team members suffer. Everyone from the cook to the helicopter pilot is supporting, either directly

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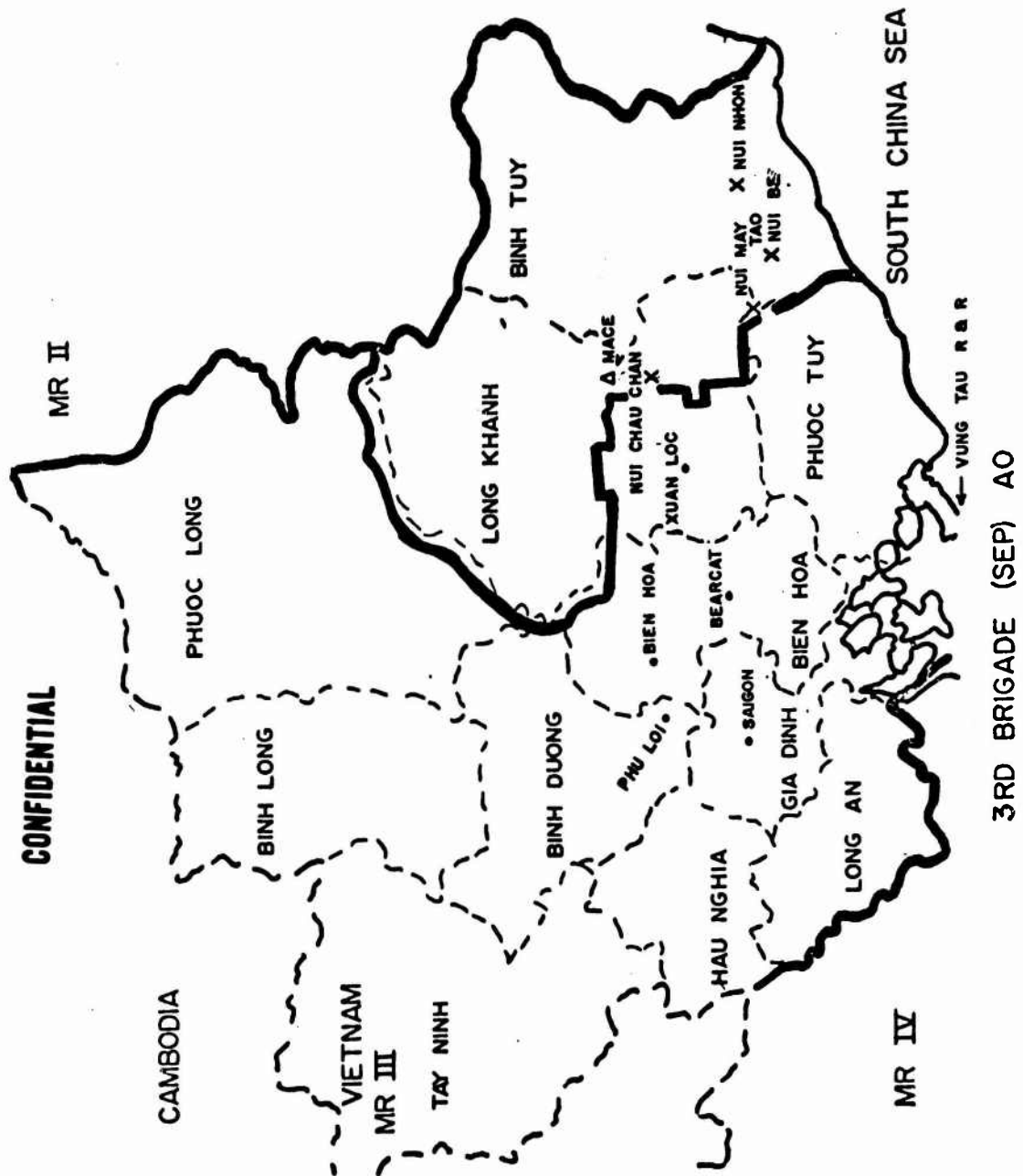
or indirectly, the man in the bush. At this stage of the war, it is still the infantryman that must carry the brunt of the war, and it is our duty to do all we can to make his task as easy as possible. The continued success of the Brigade and its many noteworthy accomplishments have verified the fact that our soldiers are as good as I have stated, and that the 1st Cavalry Division is still THE FIRST TEAM.

7 Incl
as

Jonathan R. Burton
JONATHAN R. BURTON
Brigadier General, USA
Commanding

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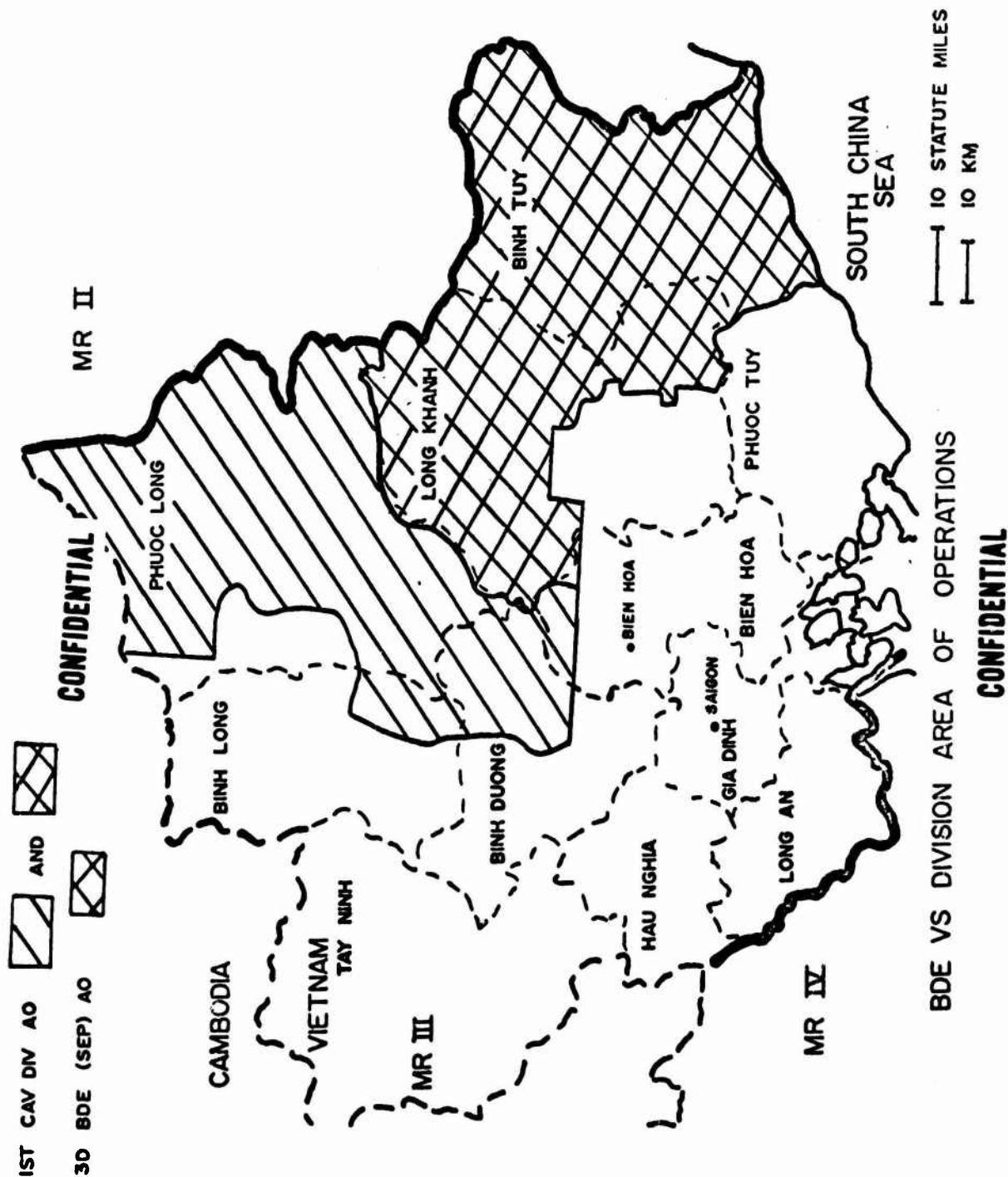
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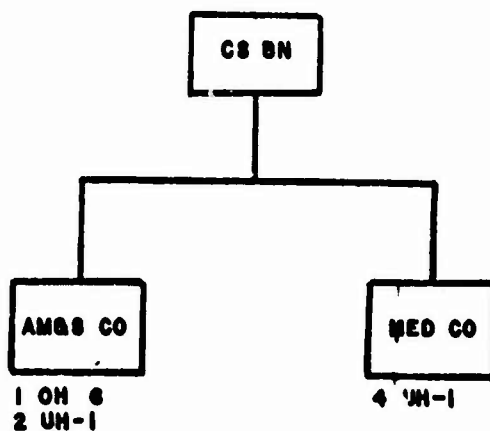
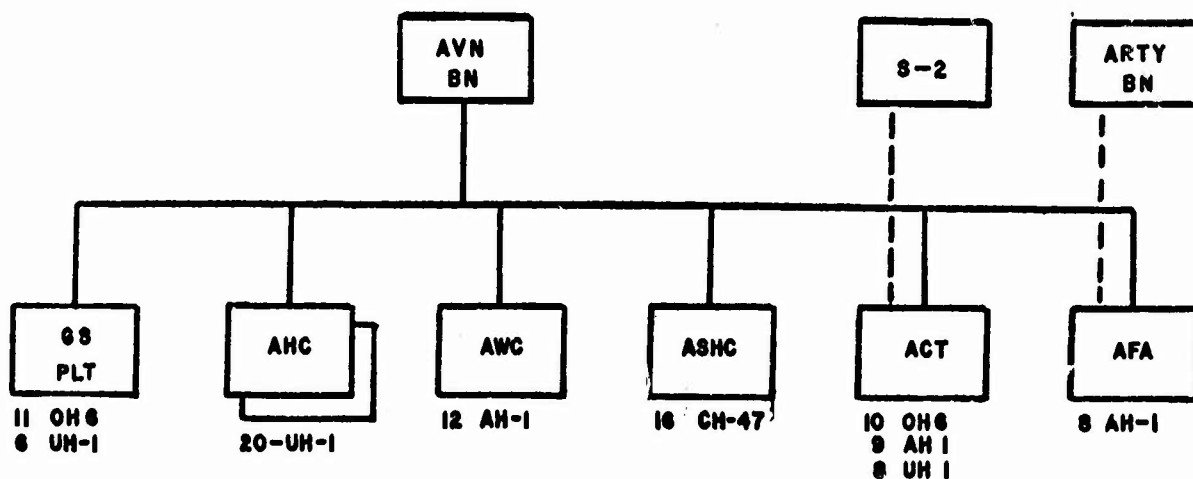
3RD BRIGADE (SEP) AO

INCLOSURE 1 to Inclosure 1



INCLOSURE 2 to Inclosure 1

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OPERATIONAL CONTROL - - - - -

INCLOSURE 5 to Inclosure 1

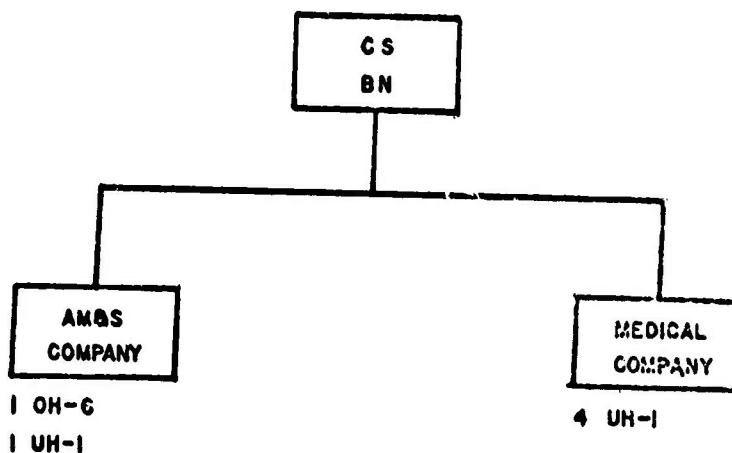
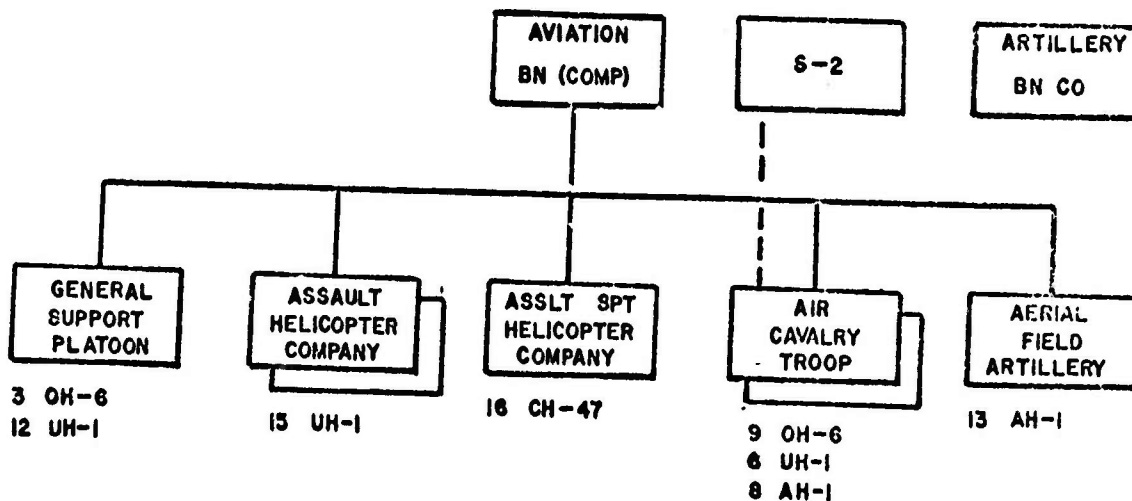
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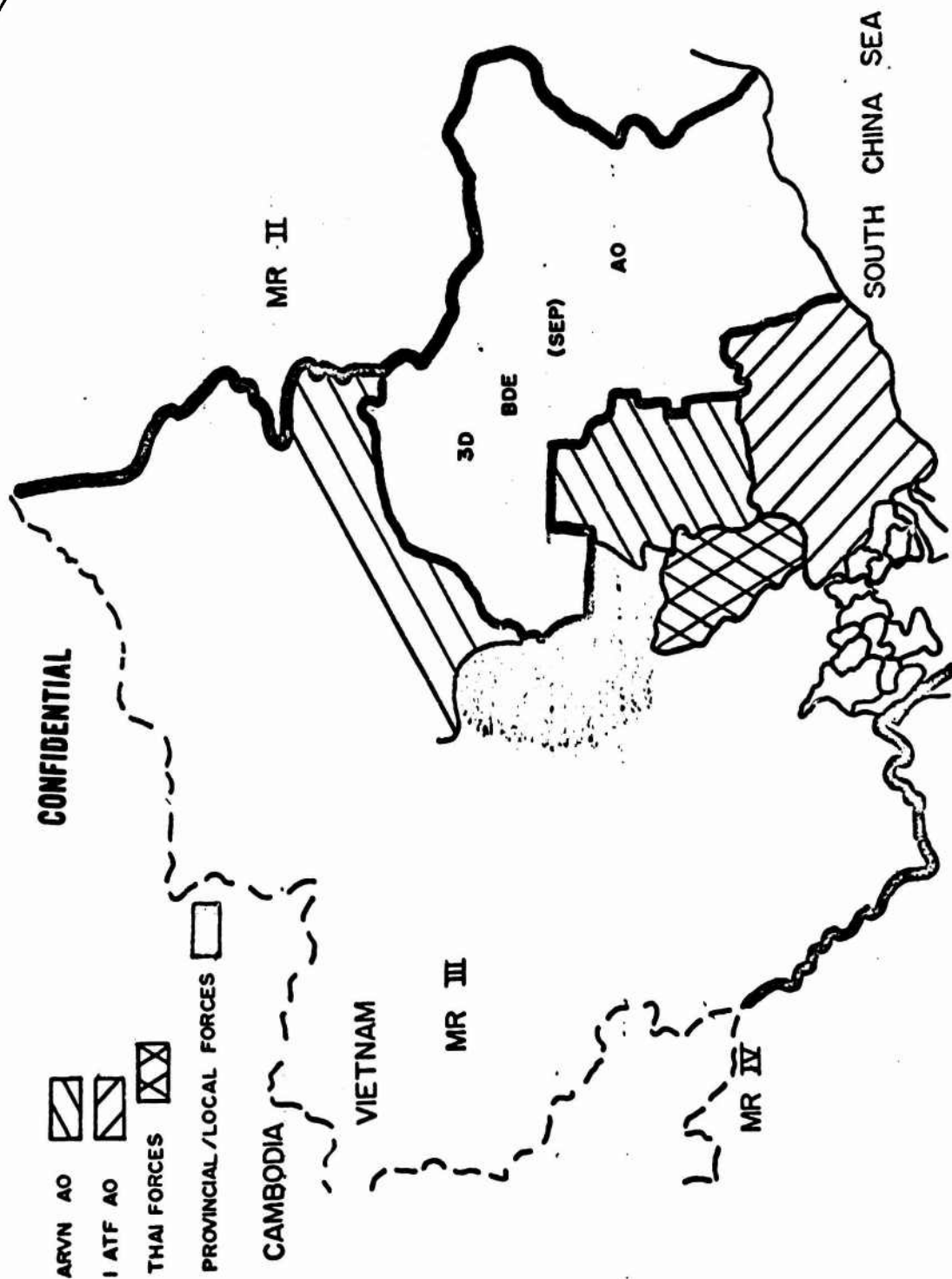


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OPERATIONAL CONTROL - - - -

INCLOSURE 6 to Inclosure 1

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ALLIED AREAS OF OPERATION

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INCLOSURE 7 to Inclosure 1

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